

A PERIOD OF ARMED TRUCE

mercial representative, or attach^ to the Soviet Embassy. Hence Ms official function served only as a disguise for his real duties. An illegal or secret resident was an agent who had no connection with official Soviet missions. He was expected to establish himself permanently in a foreign country, to adopt a trade or a profession, and thus to become independent of anything that might happen to the official Soviet mission. If as a result of the rupture of diplomatic relations a Soviet Embassy had to leave the country, the illegal resident remained and continued his work. In the early twenties there was a tendency to favor the system of legal residents as the facilities that an extraterritorial embassy or a consulate afforded were obvious. In 1957-1939, however, this practice was more or less abandoned because the Soviets expected a capitalist war of intervention and a possible rupture of diplomatic relations with several countries as a prelude to it. Consequently more emphasis was put on organizing a network of secret residents.

The Oriental Sector had a number of agents in Iran, Afghanistan, Turkey, Iraq, and several other Eastern countries. These agents were men of wide experience in the type of work to which they were assigned. They had usually passed, before their foreign appointments, through an apprenticeship in the domestic Eastern Section. Very often they were graduates of one of the Soviet academies of oriental languages, Tashkent and Moscow schools being prominent in this respect. Likewise many of them were oriental natives, recruited mainly from among the peoples of Turkestan and the Caucasus. The G.P.U. work in Iran was directed from the center in Moscow, but

three provincial G.P.U. offices, those of Tashkent, Baku, and Tiflis, were specially concerned with Iran's border provinces.

Nominally the foreign policy of Soviet Russia was directed by the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs. Yet the G.P.U., which as a rule was better informed on the situation abroad, had much to say about it and often disagreed with the Foreign Commissariat. Ultimately quarrels between these two bodies were settled by the Politburo.

On the whole, the G.P.U. played an important role in the actual shaping and execution of Soviet foreign policy toward Iran. In 1925 a revolt broke out in Khorasan. It was headed by an army officer,